



State of California
Respiratory Care Board

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Inquiry: I am faxing you this letter to inquire about CPAP, Auto CPAP and BiPAP set ups. I realize respiratory therapy programs educate their students on how to do CPAP set-up, but so do polysomnography programs. I have made inquiries with the Department of Health Services in regards to this and I am now seeking your guidance. I need a copy of the law or laws that state if you are not a licensed Respiratory Therapist you can not do a set up or titration. I am very well aware that it is in the Respiratory Care Board's scope of practice but where does it say that only Respiratory Therapist can perform this procedure.

Response: Section 3702 of the practice act specifically defines what the practice act means and includes. It defines the practice of respiratory care as caring for patients with deficiencies and abnormalities, which affect the pulmonary system, and associated aspects of cardiopulmonary and other system functions. Based upon the current practice act it does require that a licensed respiratory care practitioner administer or educates patients on CPAP, Auto CPAP and BiPAP utilizing a physician's order. Because of the potential risk to patient safety unlicensed personnel cannot perform these practices.

Reference # 2002-C-38